

Promise Neighborhoods Round 3 Competition Announced

The U.S. Department of Education has released the 2012 [application](#) for the Promise Neighborhoods program, which will provide \$60 million to continue support for existing implementation grants and award new planning and implementation grants. Adult education providers are eligible. As part of the [White House Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative](#), Promise Neighborhoods seeks to direct federal funding to transform neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into neighborhoods of opportunity. **Applications are due July 27, 2012** and must be fully uploaded and submitted, as well as date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system, by 4:30 p.m. EST. Awards will be made in December 2012.

Planning grants will support cradle-to-career services for high-need communities. Implementation grants will support efforts to enlist and coordinate better education, health, and safety services; provide young people the opportunity to be successful in school and everyday life; and boost family engagement in student learning and access to learning technology. Funds may be used to improve learning inside and outside of school; build support staff; secure additional and sustainable funding sources; and establish data systems to record the community's development and progress.

Nonprofits, institutions of higher education and Indian tribes are invited to apply for funds to improve educational outcomes for students in distressed neighborhoods. We encourage interested parties, particularly adult education providers, to review [Proposed Implementation Grant Priority 8: Family Engagement in Learning Through Adult Education](#), a priority when plans are coordinated with adult education providers serving neighborhood residents.

The Department will provide \$27 million for up to seven new implementation grants with estimated first-year awards of \$4 to \$6 million. Implementation grantees will receive annual awards over three to five years. An additional \$7 million will fund up to 14 one-year planning grants estimated at \$500,000 each. Remaining funds will provide year-two funding to the five 2011 implementation grantees.

Adult Education and Immigrant Integration Procurement

OVAE seeks a contractor for the new procurement, Adult Education and Immigrant Integration, to develop a technical assistance model based upon the three pillars of immigrant integration: linguistic, civic and economic. OVAE requires technical expertise in designing an integrative and innovative approach to reduce barriers for skilled and low-skilled immigrants and refugees, and integrate them into the U.S. workforce. OVAE is engaged in market research to identify potential offerors, clarify OVAE's requirements, and remove barriers to maximize competition. Interested parties are invited to participate in a webinar on Wednesday May 9, 2012, at 1:30 p.m. If you're interested in the webinar email colin.alleyne@ed.gov and sheryl.adler@ed.gov. For additional information on the webinar, visit www.fbo.gov solicitation number EDVAE12R0058.

Alignment at Work in CTE

As indicated in the April 19 *OVAE Connection* discussion of the [Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education](#), the principle of alignment is focused on ensuring that CTE students are enrolled in high-quality programs offering a streamlined, structured sequence of rigorous, blended college-preparatory and career-oriented instruction that prepares them for the high-demand, high-skill occupations of the 21st century. The administration's proposal anticipates that such programs will be more responsive to labor market demands and increase state involvement in assuring that. The proposal also calls for secondary school teachers and college faculty to work together to integrate academic, career, and technical content to enable students to both grasp the material and appreciate its connections to real-life career scenarios and choices.

Alignment was a featured subject in a recent national press call that Secretary Duncan, OVAE Assistant Secretary Dann-Messier, and Stan Litow, IBM's vice president for corporate citizenship and corporate affairs and president of the IBM International Foundation, hosted for reporters. Litow began his remarks by applauding the blueprint because it will "better prepare America's youth for college and careers." Litow noted, however, that a crisis is upon us, saying, "We often talk of a jobs crisis, but when you look at the data we really have a skills crisis and we really need action." Litow also pointed out that the demand for skilled workers already exists. "Fourteen million jobs will be created in the next ten years for students with strong associate degrees [sic]. If more students get these skills, businesses will benefit, the individual students will benefit, and the country will be more competitive."

Litow described the efforts that IBM is making to address the skills crisis. Through its partnership with the New York City Department of Education and area colleges and universities it has launched the Pathways in Technology, Early College High School, or P-TECH. This new model incorporates grades nine through 14 into one school that culminates in students receiving high school diplomas, associate degrees in computer technology, and an agreement that they will have priority consideration for jobs at IBM. P-TECH prepares students with the academic and workplace skills that they will need to transition from training programs directly into high-paying careers in the IT industry or to pursue additional postsecondary education. Said Litow, "A major component of IBM's commitment to P-TECH has been to align job skills to the school's curriculum." As IBM determines the skills that will be needed for tomorrow's jobs, it will continue to align the P-TECH curriculum with those skills to ensure that students are preparing for existing or future careers and high-paying jobs. According to Litow, the P-TECH model is now being replicated in Chicago, where five new P-TECH schools are scheduled to open in September 2012. New York City also will be opening more P-TECH schools. As Litow avers, "You really need to move to scale."

The next column will discuss the principle of collaboration.